

American Renaissance

Purpose

Students will identify individuals in the arts and literature and their roles in portraying American culture in the nineteenth century; use a variety of information resources to identify examples of traditional arts, fine arts, music and literature that reflect the ideals of American democracy in different historical periods; and present electronic presentations of selected artist and works.

Materials

For the teacher: chalk, chalkboard

For each student: paper, pencil

For each pair of students: copy of Black Line Master (BLM) *Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature Museum*, access to a variety of information resources (e.g., the Internet, textbook, reference materials), computer presentation software

Activity

A. Introduction

1. Review with students what life was like during the nineteenth century in America.
2. Explain that the mid-nineteenth century is referred to as the American Renaissance because so much unique art and literature were being produced at this time.
3. Ask students to talk about how our society's movement from an agrarian society of small producers to an urban society of industrial corporations might have influenced one's assessment of this time in our country's history.

B. Establishing an Art and Literature Museum

1. Tell students that their class has been asked to establish a museum of art and literature of the nineteenth century.
2. Discuss with students the fact that society's culture is often reflected in its art and literature.
3. List the following artists and writers on the chalkboard as you give a brief description of their work: John James Audubon (painter of North American birds), Winslow Homer (painter of landscapes and

Technology Literacy Standards

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
1	X	X	X	X		X	X
2	X		X			X	X
3	X		X			X	X
4		X				X	X
5						X	X
6		X		X		X	
7						X	
8						X	
9						X	
10						X	
11				X		X	
12						X	
13				X			
14							
15				X			
16							

= This Technology Literacy Standard is addressed in this lesson.

X = This Technology Literacy Standard is not addressed in this lesson.



marine subjects), Edward Bannister (painter of landscapes), Edmonia Lewis (sculptor), Henry Ossawa Tanner (realist painter), Louisa May Alcott (abolitionist author), Washington Irving (author and essayist), James Fennimore Cooper (author of stories of the sea), Walt Whitman (poet), Frederick Douglass (abolitionist, former slave, and author), Paul Dunbar (poet), George Caleb Bingham (painter of North American frontier life).

4. Divide the class into pairs and give each pair a copy of the BLM *Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature Museum*.
5. Tell students it is their task to convince a committee (the rest of the class) that their artist should be included in this newly planned museum and to do this they need to complete the project described on the BLM.
6. Allow time for students work on the computer using presentation software.
7. Establish a due date and presentations to be made in class.

C. Presentations and Discussion

1. On the due date, have students give their presentations.
2. After the presentations, have each class member choose his or her top five choices for the museum and list their reasons for each artist.
3. Tally the number of choices for each artist made by the class.

Questions for Review

Basic Concepts and Processes

After the activity, ask questions about each artist such as:



What significant contribution did [*insert name of figure*] make during this period of United States history?



How was his or her work accepted by the people?



How did his or her work reflect the culture of the nineteenth century?

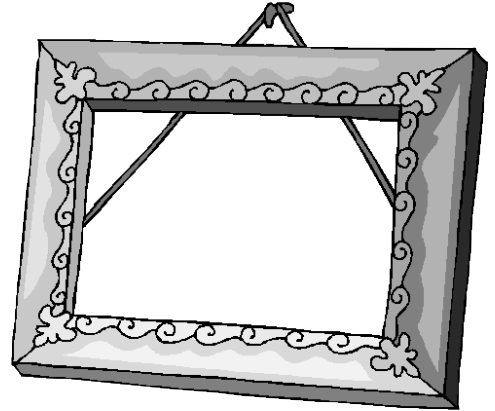
Name: _____

Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature Museum

You have been assigned the name of a nineteenth-century writer or artist for nomination into the Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature Museum.

Your two-page nomination of this individual should include the following:

1. A short biography of the artist
2. What type of work he or she created
3. What motivated the individual to create
4. How the work was accepted in America at the time
5. The main subjects of the artist's work
6. How the work reflected the times and society



Your nomination proposal should also include at least five samples of your artist's creations. These can be presented as posters, overhead transparencies, a computer presentation, or another format of your choosing.

List the titles of the samples below:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

You must use at least three different resources in your research. Cite your resources below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Nineteenth Century Art and Literature Museum

Teacher Directions

Tell students that their class has been asked to establish a museum of art and literature of the nineteenth century. Discuss with students the fact that society's culture is often reflected in its art and literature.

List the following artists and writers on the chalkboard as you give a brief description of their work: John James Audubon (painter of North American birds), Winslow Homer (painter of landscapes and marine subjects), Edward Bannister (painter of landscapes), Edmonia Lewis (sculptor), Henry Ossawa Tanner (realist painter), Louisa May Alcott (abolitionist author), Washington Irving (author and essayist), James Fennimore Cooper (author of stories of the sea), Walt Whitman (poet), Frederick Douglass (abolitionist, former slave, and author), Paul Dunbar (poet), George Caleb Bingham (painter of North American frontier life).

Divide the class into pairs and give each pair a copy of the BLM *Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature Museum*. Tell students it is their task to convince a committee (the rest of the class) their artist should be included in this newly planned museum and to do this they need to complete the project described on the BLM. Allow time for students to work on the computer using computer presentation software; establish a due date for presentations to be made in class.

On the due date, have students give their presentations. After the presentations, have each class member choose his or her top five choices for the museum and list their reasons for each artist. Tally the number of choices for each artist made by the class.

Answer Key

Not applicable.